

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A connector, comprising:

a housing (20) formed with at least one cavity (21) into which at least one terminal fitting (10) is insertable, a restricting portion (35) being formed on the housing (20); and

a retainer (40) for locking the terminal fitting (10), the retainer (40) being mounted on a retainer mounting surface of the housing (20) for movement between a first locking position (FIG. 8) where the retainer (40) permits insertion and withdrawal of the terminal fitting (10) into and from the cavity (21) and a second locking position (FIG. 13) where the retainer (40) locks the terminal fittings (10), the retainer (40) having at least one resiliently deformable locking piece (47) for preventing the retainer (40) from being pushed from the first locking position to the second locking position by engaging the restricting portion (35) on the housing (20), and the locking piece (47) being configured to be pressed and deformed out of engagement with the restricting portion (35).

2. The connector of claim 1, wherein the cavity (21) has a resiliently deformable lock (26) for partially locking the terminal fitting (10) in the cavity (21).

3. The connector of claim 2, wherein in the first locking position (FIG. 8) the retainer (40) is retracted from deformation spaces (27) for the locks (26) to permit the insertion and withdrawal of the terminal fittings (10) into and from the cavities (21); and wherein in the second locking position (FIG: 13) the retainer (40) enters the deformation spaces (26) to prevent deformation of the locks (26).

4. The connector of claim 1, wherein the locking piece (47) is provided at a position to be pressable as substantially opposite side surfaces of the retainer (40) are held by fingers.

5. The connector of claim 1, wherein the restricting portion (35) is a projection, and the retainer (40) is prevented from being pushed to the second locking position by contact of an engageable portion (50) provided at a projecting end of the locking piece (47) with one surface (37) of the restricting portion (35).

6. The connector of claim 5, wherein the retainer (40) is held at the second locking position so as not to come off by the contact of the engageable portion (50) with another surface (36) of the restricting portion (35).

7. The connector of claim 6, wherein an inner surface of the engageable portion (50) at the leading end surface is formed into a guiding surface (53) sloped moderately outwardly toward the leading end.

8. The connector according of claim 1, wherein two locking pieces (47) are provided at substantially opposite side surfaces of the retainer (40).

9. The connector of claim 1, wherein the locking piece (47) is supported pivotably on the retainer (40) by supports (48).

10. The connector of claim 9, wherein the locking piece (47) is pivotally displaceable about the supports (48) while deforming a deformable portion (49).

11. The connector of claim 1, wherein the locking piece (47) is pressable in a pushing direction (PD) arranged at an angle to a mounting direction (MD) of the retainer (40).

12. A connector, comprising:

a housing (20) with opposite front and rear ends and at least one cavity (21) extending between the front and rear ends for receiving a terminal fitting (10), the housing further having opposite first and second side surfaces and a restricting portion (35) being formed on each of the side surfaces of the housing (20); and

a retainer (40) mounted on the housing (20) at a first locking position (FIG. 8) where the retainer (40) permits insertion of the terminal fitting (10) into the cavity (21), the retainer (40) having first and second resiliently deformable locking pieces (47) engaged respectively with the first and second restricting portions (35) on the housing (20) for preventing the retainer (40) from being pushed along a moving direction (MD) beyond the first locking position (FIG. 8), the first and second locking pieces (47) each having a pressing portion (55) configured to be pressed in a pressing direction (PD) aligned at an angle to the moving direction (MD) for deforming the locking pieces (47) out of engagement with the restricting portions (35) and permitting the retainer (40) to be moved in the moving direction (MD) to a second locking position (FIG. 13) where the retainer (40) locks the terminal fittings (10).

13. The connector of claim 12, wherein the cavity (21) has a resiliently deformable lock (26) for partially locking the terminal fitting (10) in the cavity (21).

14. The connector of claim 13, wherein the retainer (40), in the first locking position (FIG. 8), is retracted from deformation spaces (27) for the locks (26) to permit the insertion of the terminal fitting (10) into the cavity (21); and wherein the retainer (40), in the second locking position (FIG. 13), enters the deformation spaces (26) to prevent deformation of the locks (26).

15. The connector of claim 12, wherein the pressable portions (55) are provided at positions to be pressed towards one another as the retainer (40) is held by fingers.

16. The connector of claim 12, wherein the restricting portions (35) are projections, and an engageable portion (50) being formed at a projecting end of each of the locking pieces (47) for engaging a surface (37) of the respective restricting portion (35) for preventing the retainer (40) from being pushed to the second locking position (FIG. 13).

17. The connector of claim 16, wherein the retainer (40) is held at the second locking position (FIG. 13) so as not to come off by the contact of each said engageable portion (50) with another surface (36) of the respective restricting portion (35).

18. The connector of claim 12, wherein the locking pieces (47) are supported pivotably on the retainer (40) by supports (48).

19. A method of assembling a connector, comprising:

providing a housing (20) formed with cavities (21);

mounting a retainer (40) on the housing (20) so that a resiliently deformable locking piece (47) of the retainer (40) engages a restricting portion (35) on the housing (30) to hold the retainer (40) at a first locking position (FIG. 8);

inserting terminal fittings (10) into the cavities (21);

pressing the resiliently deformable locking piece (47) of the retainer (40) in a pressing direction (PD) to disengage the locking piece (47) from the restricting portion (35); and

pushing the retainer (40) in a mounting direction (MD) aligned at an angle to the pushing direction (PD) for moving the retainer (40) from the first locking position (FIG. 8) to a second locking position (FIG. 13) where the retainer (40) locks the terminal fittings (10).